



Forest Service
Alaska Region

Tongass National Forest
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Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness

In 1980, the United States Congress designated 653,179 acres as the Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness. Located midway between Juneau and Petersburg, this wilderness can be accessed by motorboats, large vessels or commercial cruise boats, and floatplanes. Tracy and Endicott are two long and narrow arms of saltwater that are bordered by steep rock walls and glacier-covered mountains. At the head of each fiord is an active tidewater glacier, which calves icebergs frequently. About 75 percent of the area is considered alpine, which includes 20 percent glaciers and snow fields. It is strategically managed to continue the preservation of this undeveloped, enduring ecosystem for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Wilderness Laws

The Wilderness Act, ANILCA, and the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan of 2008 (TLMP) give direction to designated wilderness areas in the Tongass National Forest. The Wilderness Act, ANILCA and/or TLMP **prohibit** the following:

- ◆ Commercial enterprise (except for outfitters and guides)
- ◆ Permanent and temporary roads
- ◆ Use of motor vehicles and motorized equipment (except motorboats, and fixed wing airplanes)
- ◆ Mechanized form of transport (i.e. bicycles, wheelbarrows)
- ◆ Damaging of live trees
- ◆ Construction of structures and installations
- ◆ Landing of helicopters

Under ANILCA and TLMP temporary structures are allowed but are limited to a 14-day stay at any one location. TLMP also mandates a **group size limit of no more than 12 persons** for commercial or general public use within this wilderness. These regulations are established for the wilderness character to remain undeveloped, and natural for future use.

Facilities

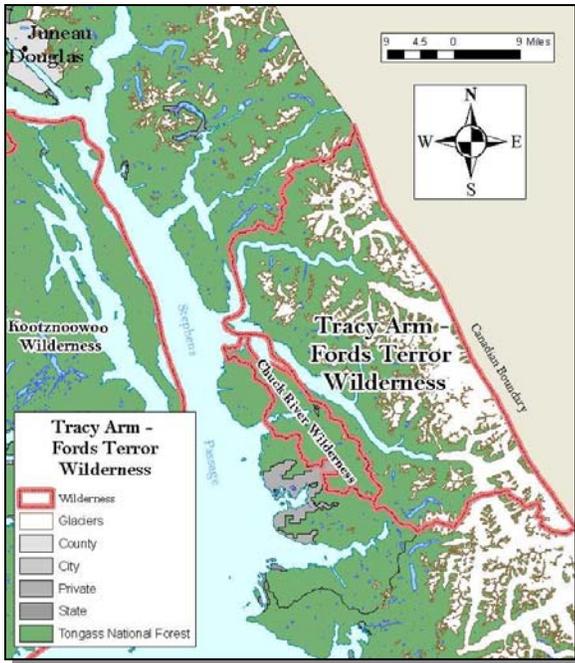
There are no established hiking trails or public recreation facilities in Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness.



Wilderness Character

Behold primordial time itself: a glacier reminding us of an ice age that began over a million years ago. Across the millennia this condensed ice flowed down from the mountains grinding granites into flour. Today the glacier retreats as it calves icebergs into the sea and continues its centuries-old unveiling of the dramatic fiord it has sculpted. Ancient crumbling ice supports precious new life: a harbor seal pup born minutes ago flops on an iceberg. Eagles descend on the afterbirth and possibly the hapless pup itself. The mother squirms to protect her vulnerable newborn. Then she pushes her pup into the water and follows, their awkwardness on ice transformed into aquatic grace.





Threats and Benefits

While designated wilderness areas have the most protections of any other public lands, there are still threats that degrade the wilderness resource. Illegal outfitting and guiding, illegal hunting, social impacts on wilderness visitors due to heavy motorized use on marine waters and crowding at limited campsites, illegal storage of commercial fishing equipment and resource damage by cutting of trees, improperly disposed of human waste and litter, and damaging of flora are the major threats to this wilderness. Building awareness and a better understanding of designated wilderness areas is the key foundation to ensure that these areas stay wild.

Along with providing excellent recreational opportunities, designated wilderness areas protect natural ecosystems from being manipulated or developed. They provide us with clean air and clean water, and allow the natural processes to continue without the permanent presence of humans. As the current laws continue to give management direction, no wilderness on the Tongass will have a commercial timber harvest or construction of permanent roads. Due to the action of Congress in 1980, Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness will remain protected for future generations.

Wilderness Challenges

People are lured into Alaska for its beauty and excitement but remember it is also very unforgiving. Tracy Arm-Fords Terror Wilderness is within a temperate rainforest where the average summer temperatures are between 35-60°F. Be prepared with the appropriate clothing, safety equipment, shelter supplies, and water purifying devices for a cool and frequently overcast climate. This wilderness also contains brown and black bears so store food and trash properly. If traveling by motorboat or kayak, be cautious when approaching the face of a glacier because of the heavy calving activity and around large iceberg that tend to flip.

Leave No Trace

Tongass National Forest is the largest, intact coastal rainforest in America. The Tracy Arm—Fords Terror Wilderness is a piece of this treasure and is set aside for all visitors – now and in the future. To insure that this area is left unimpaired for future use, practice the following Leave No Trace principles.

- ◆ Plan ahead and be prepared for extreme weather conditions, and emergencies.
- ◆ Travel and camp on durable surfaces. There are a few primitive campsites along the coastline of this wilderness. Check with the Juneau Ranger District for maps and information.
- ◆ Dispose of waste properly. **Pack out** all trash, leftover food, and toilet paper. During appropriate conditions dispose of human waste in the intertidal zone. If camping in upland forests dispose of solid waste by digging a cat hole 6 to 8 inches deep located at least 200 feet from water or campsite.
- ◆ Leave what you find. Examine but do not touch cultural or historical structures and artifacts. Do not build structures or furniture with live trees.
- ◆ Minimize campfire impacts. Use a lightweight stove when possible. When a campfire is necessary, keep fires small. Build a fire below mean high tide, or when in a forested area, build a mound fire or use a fire pan to avoid damaging the ground vegetation. Stay away from boulders or tree bases to avoid long lasting black scars.
- ◆ Respect visitors and wildlife (especially birthing harbor seals) that are in the surrounding area.

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